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There is now no turning, for the three hunters, rapidly closing up, urge them from behind, with shouts and the waving of their flags.

AUTUMN FANCIES

BY MALCOLM TAYLOR, JR.

Not did Fancy, but did Chance lie,
Drew my heedless footsteps, see!
Where, self only, yet not lonely,
Muse I on the waning year,
'Neath the umbrage of the foliage,
Scarlet, yellow, brown and sere.

Some weird fancy does entrance me,
Making, like as in a dream,
Lovers, friends, and foes, seem,
Like as foes, fairies seem
Dancing, leaping, timed-step keeping,
To the music of the stream.

Strange the fancy, leaves do glance, see!
Rainbow hues reflecting bright,
Autumn's glowing richness showing,
Seeming lively to the sight;
Yet, that same fancy, they are paing
'Neath the come of day's blight.

This sad fancy does advance fast,
Hopes are leaves of golden glow,
That, when living, last giving,
Serve a cheering light to throw,
But when brightest fell fate smites,
Crushing all beneath the blow.

The Mustangers:

A TALE OF THE CROSS TIMBERS.

BY CAPTAIN MAYNE REID,
AUTHOR OF "HEADLESS HORSEMAN," "SCALP-HUNTERS," "LONE RANCHO," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE MUSTANG-DRIVE.

A drove of wild horses, numbering over a hundred head. Of all colors—jet-black and snow-white; bay, sorrel and roan; steel-gray and spotted. They are moving across a prairie—a Texan prairie—near the eastern edge of the "Lower Cross-Timbers," along the side of a stream that, some ten miles below, becomes tributary to the Trinity river. The banks of the stream are steep and sheer, and the current between runs strong and swift. On that side it guides the course of the *caecilada*; for the horses will not dare to cross it. On their other flank is the prairie, smooth and open. At intervals they turn their heads toward it, as if desirous of betaking themselves in that direction. Something restrains them; and they continue on down the bank of the stream.

A traveler, coming suddenly within sight of this herd, would be struck with a singularity in their appearance and movements. Instead of scouring the plain at a canter, or quick gallop—as is their wont—they are moving at a slow pace. Now and then it livens into a trot, or, at times, a brisker walk, as though flies were urging them on. But soon they subside into the old, bigging gait, going on with apparent reluctance.

Under ordinary circumstances, wild horses, when encountered on the prairie, are seen either at rest or in full career—rearing and cowering, with heads erect,

curved necks, and tails sweeping horizontally behind them. The behavior of the *caecilada* in question is altogether different. There is not a curving neck or raised tail among them. On the contrary, their heads are down and drooping; their eyes dull; their flanks hollow, and their limbs dragging after them, as if each and all had been just loosened out of harness, after a prolonged spell of plowing. They look tired, jaded, dejected. They look as if they were being driven!

And this is just what they are—their drivers appearing in the form of three horsemen, coming up behind, at wide distances apart. Not horsemen, either, for the men thus mentioned are mounted on large, strong mules.

To a novice on the Texan prairies, this tableau would appear strange. On first viewing it, he could not give credence to his senses. A herd of wild horses—the wildest and shyest animals in existence—driven tamely along by three men mounted upon mules—slow mules, from which, at a single dash, they might escape; and over their own uninhabited, infilitable pastures, where they might retreat to any distance, even beyond the range of vision and the danger of pursuit. It would, indeed, seem incredible. But the explanation is easy.

The men coming behind are *mustangers*—hunters of the wild horse by profession. They know all his haunts and habits, and can make him their captive without using either the rifle or lasso. They have long marked the herd they are now following, and made themselves acquainted with its habitat—it's "range" of pasturing, and its places for watering. On a given day they have started it in full chase, themselves following slowly after, each leading two spare mules. The wild horse, when first pursued, does not retreat in a direct line, but in wide, sweeping circles, returning again near to his point of departure. Sometimes he does not even go out of sight, but gallops back, as if moved by a spirit of defiance, or yielding to curiosity. In this way he soon fatigues himself, making fifty miles while the pursuer may have to travel only ten.

The mustanger, husbanding the strength of his animals, by his provident relays, soon overhauls the herd, starting it off into a fresh run. Again he takes the shorter diagonal, and again comes up with it—repeating the movement until the wild steeds begin to lose spirit under the implacable pursuit. They are, by this time, beginning to feel fatigued, after having made so many idle and out-of-the-way courses. They are getting hungry, too, in their haste not having been permitted to pasture. They will be thirsty also, and, perhaps, make a break for some distant watering-place, well known to the mustanger, who follows them at his best speed, generally taking a shorter route than they. He sometimes arrives in time to hinder them from drinking, but always to prevent their browsing—or, at least, filling their bellies.

Again the wild horses make halt. They seem to have suspicions about entering upon such a narrow defile; and show signs of making a break for the outer prairie. But, from that side, they see two of their pursuers approaching, each waving a little flag, with which he is provided. In despair, they turn toward the stream; and striking into a slow trot, continue on between the wood and the water.

Once inside the corral, the mustangs are easily caught and conquered with the lasso. The process is a cruel one; so much so that the wild horse, ever after, at sight of a raw-hide rope, will come to hand, and stand trembling before his tamer.

It is a capture of this kind, that is taking

place on the banks of the stream leading to the Trinity. It is near its completion, as can be told by the dragging gait of the horses, and their thoroughly submissive demeanor; as also by the gestures of the men behind, every moment growing more earnest.

In front, there is a *motte*, or island of timber, standing about a hundred yards from the bank of the stream; leaving a space of open prairie between. Toward this opening they are directing the drove; as if to drive them through it.

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Once more the pursuit is continued, though now in a more direct line, for the steeds are tired, and have no relish for scampering. They are hungry, too, and they are not permitted. While grasping at the herbage beneath their feet, they hear the relentless pursuers behind, who make themselves heard in time, and the grass remains unbroken.

Night comes on. Still, this brings no relief to them—no cessation to that never-ending, never-tiring pursuit. All night long are they compelled to move on, without a moment of rest, and scarce a morsel of food. And when day again breaks over the broad prairie, the hunters are there behind them.

During the whole of another day, and often throughout another night, are they driven, though now in a more direct line, for the steeds are tired, and have no relish for scampering. They are hungry, too, and they are not permitted. While grasping at the herbage beneath their feet, they hear the relentless pursuers behind, who make themselves heard in time, and the grass remains unbroken.

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across the river, "thar on 't other side ar' plenty o' timmer, whar there shed be b'ar and deer—to say nothing about squirrel and turkey. I guess, squire, you can't do better than to eat jest whar we've pulled up."

"What do you say, Eugene? The ground looks good, for either cotton or tobacco; and I think we're far enough south for sugar. What's your opinion?"

The speaker turned round to his nephew, who, being a Louisianian, was expected to know all about the soil that would be suitable for the sugar-cane. But Eugene had also turned round, and ridden up to the Dearborn, inside which was something sweeter to his thoughts—his fair cousin, Tennessee.

Baffled, the colonel also approached the wagon, and put the question to all together: how they would like to settle on that spot?

"Charming!" exclaimed the impulsive Tennessee; "we can have splendid bouquets and garlands of flowers—only for the gathering!"

"It is a very beautiful country," simply remarked her cousin, over whose young face could be detected a shade of melancholy—almost sadness.

"Do you think it will grow sugar, Eugene?" again asked Colonel Magoffin, addressing himself to the elegant young Creole, in sky-blue cottonade, and Panama hat.

"I don't think it would, uncle," was the discouraging answer; "it's a little too far north. But what matters, so long as you can grow cotton? Remember, a pound of cotton is worth more than one of sugar; and here, I think, the chief question will be about transporting the produce to a market."

"That's so," said the colonel. "Well, it'll give us cotton, sure; and corn for the niggers, and the horses. Till we can raise our own hog-meat, we must live upon venison, with now and then a bear-ham, and a breast of turkey; so that we may be as well off in the old house in Tennessee."

Magoffin said this with something like a sigh; for he remembered that, in the "old house in Tennessee," he had been surrounded with every comfort, until that time when a too-generous heart, leading to a too-profuse hospitality, had brought the bailiff to his gates, and left him almost landless and niggered—his attenuated sable following being all that was left of a plantation counting over two hundred hands. Still the new movement was not disagreeable to him, but rather the reverse. He was of that migratory stock who can not dwell contented, except on the furthest frontier. Originally of the East Tennessee settlement, they had gone on to Nashville, in the center—and thence to Memphis in the west. Here again, the houses had become too thick, and the country too closely fenced around them. Therefore, the colonel—though with the loss of over three-fourths of his property—was glad to escape from the so-called increasing civilization, and seek a home in some land where the first fence-rail had not yet been split. He was to find it in the country of the Cross Timbers; and the spot where his wagon had halted seemed the very place he would have chosen for a home.

He chose it.

CHAPTER III.

A COMRADE SUSPECTED.

"I don't like him, Ed; I don't like him. This chile can't feel a freeze frost that fell—nor can he fix it."

"For that matter, Wash, I don't like him myself. But we agreed to his coming out with us."

"Who agreed? Not me—durned ef I did. Jest t'otherways. I war all ag'in it. I never know'd three fellors go trappin' or huntin' together, that ther wan't quarrels an' conspirin' amon' 'em; an' one o' the three war boun' to be in the meinority. On the purair, jest as when you go coatin' a gurl, three's no kumpany. Remember what I tol' ye, that we'd be better to 'a left him behin'; an' let himoller his own trail; but you wud' hev him along."

"I admit I spoke in favor of his coming. He wanted so bad to be with us."

"Not so bad to be 'long w' us in purick'ler. 'Twarn't that. Ef this chile ain't mistook, what he wanted wus war to git clear out o' the settlements—anyhow, an' anywhere. That's somethin' ag'in' him that wus than a due-bill."

"You think so?"

"Sure o't—next thing to sure. Don't ye recollect, when we wur stayin' in Nacodoches, how fidgy he wur on the arrival o' every party o' emigrants, an' whenever anybody ruld up to the tavern? He 'peared to be keepin' a sharp look-out for a bailiff—an' that's jest what he wus doin', I reck'n."

"He may have committed a forgery, you think?"

"He's committed wuss than that, I shud say."

"But what makes you fancy so?"

"I've got my reasuns. Men don't ramble in that sleep—as I've heern him do, more'n once—because they've wrote that name whar they hevn't oughter. My word for it, Ed Thorneley, that's blood on that fellor's hands."

"It's a pity we brought him with us. Even if it isn't as you suspect, the suspicion of it makes me feel unpleasant. Besides, he hasn't turned out much of a cheerful companion. After all, it's gettin' to be ticklish times between us and these Indians. They don't appear to like our horse-hunting about here; and if we should come to have trouble with them, three rifles would be better than two."

"I don't know 'bout that. They mount, an' they mount. Hain't ye noticed how this kumrade o' ours takes on to that young savage, Tiger-Tail, an' his Seminoles? Ef it warn't for the diff'rent color o' that hide, you mout think they wus a kipple o' born brothers; while all the time the Injun's been sulky an' ugly w' both o' us. Don't like it a bit. This chile hev heerd o' white renegades, an' know'd o' some as betrayed their kumrades to the Injuns. Sech hev been men as hev committed murder in the settlements, and dasen't go back ther. This fellor mout be one o' the kind; an' I feel sort o' sure ye hev."

"Still, why should he betray us?"

"Why? Wal, one thing why, we've got a good gatherin' o' horses now. Our cavalry down among the plantashuns, shed fetch, leastways, a kipple o' thousand dollars. We've got enuf to make a trip w' right away. An' yit he ain't a-goin' to the settlements along w' us. I kin tell that from his talk. He means stayin' out hyur, 'mong the Injuns; an', to git well in w' them, he mout take a notion to make 'em a present o' our mustangs. They ked trapeze off as well as we kin."

"In that case, Wash, the sooner we get

off the better. We had best take the horses to Nacodoches."

"So this chile's been thinkin'; an' I guess I kin tell why you want to go to that place. That's a gurl ye want to see, Ed."

"No, as I assure you, nothing of the kind. Thank my stars, I'm as free of all such entanglements as you yourself, Wash."

"Wal, that's free enuf. This chile hain't had a scrape w' weemmen since we wur up trappin' 'mong the Crows, an' camping at Fort Laramie. I hed a squaw thar; an' I sware she shed be the last I'd ever let cling onto me. What w' her fondness for *fang fazon* an' rot-gut whisky, she ate an' drunk up the peeruses o' a hul' winter's trappin' on the head-waters o' the Platte. No more squaw wives for me—nor weemmen o' any kind."

"Ha! ha!" laughed his younger companion. "Well, that's no reason why we shouldn't soon start for the settlements. There are other pleasures there that I know will attract you."

"That's the pleasure o' sellin' our hosses, an' gittin' the shiners for 'em. Soon as we've got this last lot tamed to drivin', we'll start right away for the settlements—whether this fellor go w' us or not. He kin take his choice 'bout that, an' keep his share o' the hosses. He ain't entitled to a third o' them by rights; for he hain't been no great help to us—tuk up as he's been w' Tiger-Tail an' his brown-skinned beauties. Wagh! how I do despise any white man that puts himself on an even w' a Injun!"

CHAPTER IV.

AN UNWELCOME SIGHT.

The conversation detailed in the preceding chapter occurred between two men, mounted on mules, and riding across an open stretch of prairie. They were two of the *mustangers* described as having made a capture of the wild-horse herd, by driving them into a corral. It was just after they had completed the inclosure; and they were now on their way to the hut that served all three as a home, in order to provide ropes, and other gear, for breaking the wild steeds—as also to obtain a fresh supply of provisions. The third had been left by the corral, to see to the captured stock. It was he who had been the subject of their conversation, and was the object of their suspicion.

Their names were, respectively, Edward Thorneley and Washington Carroll—or "Wash," as his comrade called him for short. Between them there was almost as much dissimilarity as could be between any two individuals of the same race, engaged in a common calling. Physically, morally, intellectually, were they unlike one another.

Wash Carroll—the elder—was a small man, thin in face, as in person; dark of complexion; tough as tan leather; and tight as strung wire. Although perfectly honest in all dealings with men of his own color, he was not so just when it was a matter between him and *red-skins*—or even the Church; for, in a religious point of view, Wash—or "Old Wash" as his comrade called him—was something of a sinner. He was not so very old—fifty being about the number of winters he could look back upon. He was by no means of comely aspect; and his countenance—though of a cast that bespoke cunning rather than sinister thought—was not improved by the scar of an old cut, that traversed across his left cheek, from mouth to ear. By birth a Tennesseean, he had been by profession a trapper; but now that beaver "pew" had faltered to so low a price, he had forsaken the trapper's calling, and taken to that of a mustanger. He had spent the latter portion of his life upon the prairies of Texas, in pursuit of this singular occupation.

His comrade was a person of totally different characteristics. A handsome young Virginian, he had strayed down to Texas; and with Wash, had come out to the Cross Timbers—not so much to make money by following the profession of horse-hunter, as through an innate love of frontier-life, and a longing for the adventures that render it attractive, despite its perils and hardships. The present expedition was his first trip up on the prairies. In the romantic old town of Nacodoches he had made the acquaintance of Carroll; and a bargain of partnership had been struck between them. While preparing to set forth alone, a third individual had presented himself, so earnestly eager to accompany them, that, although the old hunter had at first made objections, his younger and more enthusiastic companion had overruled him, and the stranger volunteer was accepted.

He was a young man of about the same age as Thorneley himself, who gave his name as Louis Lebar, and said he was from the State of Louisiana. He was the one about whose honesty the two now entertained the suspicions imparted to each other in their conversation. From the first introduction, Wash Carroll had conceived them, and all along felt aversion to the man.

The appearance of Lebar was not in his favor. He was short and thick-set, with shoulders slightly stooping. His complexion was dark as that of a mulatto; and a heavy beard, left to grow at will, made him look still darker. In his eye there was a restlessness, and its glance was, at times, almost wolfish. Carroll's dislike for him had other reasons. He had heard utterances of a compromising kind—murderings made by the stranger in his sleep—which occurred the word "murder." Wash, lying awake and listening, had heard this ominous expression, and drawn from it sinister conclusions.

The two had ceased conversing about him, and were now riding on toward the hut, that for several weeks had served them for a home. It was a rude structure of logs, which they had erected against a rocky bluff, overlooking a branch of the Trinity river—about a mile below the place where they had constructed their corral. They had got near to it, and were riding quickly along the bank of the stream, when Wash—whose eyes were ever on the alert—suddenly jerked up his mule, with the exclamation:

"Look that!"

"Where?" inquired Thorneley.

"Thar, down the bank o' the stream. Don't ye see somethin'?"

"Yes—I see something white, like the canvas of a tent."

"Tent be durned! Taint nothin' o' the kind. It's the tilt o' a waggin."

"A wagon! Out here?"

"It air—dog-gone to fire!"

"And if so, why should it displease you to see it?"

"Displease! Durn it, I've been runnin' away from that sign all o' my life, an' now, I suppose, I've got to fit furrer. I

just made tracks from near Nashville, whar this chile war kitteren, to West Tennessee. Thar I war follered by waggin's, an' arter them, hosses. Then on to North Mississippi, whar the waggin's an' hosses kin clost arter Choctaw Purchase. I then tried Arkansaw, on 't other side. No use. Thar, too, soon appeared the cussed waggin's, an' claims, an' cabins—an' long w' em, frame houses. I put off South, for Loozyanny, on Red River bottom. More waggin's, an' more buildin's. Then, by way o' durner raysort—as the Loozyanny Creoles calls it—struck out hyar, for Texas. What's the use? Thar's the waggin ag'in—

"True; it is a wagon—or two of them, I think. But why should you be vexed at the sight of them? For my part, I feel rather pleased."

"Pleezed! Why? Do you know what them waggin's mean?"

"Some party, I presume, traveling over the prairies—perhaps on an exploring expedition."

"On a settlin' expedition! That's what they're arter. I kin tell it by the look o' the hull thing. See yonder? What's them movin' roun' the vehicles? That's men on hossback—an' that's others afoot. An' that's cows an' children. A party o' emigrants, to a certainty. I know'd they wudn't be long, afore they'd find out these Cross Timmer lands—jest the sort fer cotton. Settlers, I'll be bound; and whar now will go the wild hosses? Ed Thorneley, we may as well make up our minds to it. This'll be our last trip o' hoss-huntin' to the Cross Timmers. Take this chile's word for't, in another year thar'll be houses all about hyar—an' towns, too. Durn towns an' houses! Afore eyther o' us goes under, they'll be all over the contynent o' Ameriky. A curse to it! Most as bad as Methodies. Wagh!"

At the commencement of this tirade, the old hunter had pulled up; and, after its conclusion, he sat in his saddle scrutinizing the distant apparition upon the prairie, with a look in which stern indignation seemed strangely commingled with sadness. In that speck of snowy whiteness, which, to other eyes, might have appeared the harbinger of civilization, he saw only a cloud that in his way of thinking—threatened to throw a blighting shadow over the future—not only of his profession, but his life!

"Dog-gone queer," he exclaimed, after a short while spent in scrutinizing the forms seen moving around the wagon. "Dod-rotten queer, ef them's all that is o' them. Only two waggin's, an' eight or ten men about em—most o' em niggers, fur ez I kin make out. Some small planter, w' his belongings, I reckon. An' ef that's all they's comin' out to settle hyar, they'll stan' a poor chance w' Tiger Tail an' his ugly lot—that is, if the Injun should take a set ag'in them."

"Perhaps there are other wagons coming on behind," suggested Thorneley.

"Ef that be, they must be a good bit behind. We kin see the purairie fer ten mile, on the track they're on. What's the others? Ain't never one—nor yet the sign o' a critter, on foot or a-hossback. No; them's we see that 'pears to be the hull gang. Guess we'd better git forrad, an' find out who an' what they air, anyhow."

Saying this, he brought his heels, with a heavy, double kick, against the ribs of his mule, and set the animal in motion toward the spot where the wagons were stopped—his companion spurring up and riding alongside.

(To be continued.)

The Dark Secret: or, The Mystery of Fontelle Hall.

BY COUSIN MAY CARLETON, (MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING.)

CHAPTER IX.

JACINTO.

"By night the heavy dooors are drawn, The castle stands alone; But in the chambers 'till the dawn, Unquiet spirits move."

It was a wild cry—a woman's shrill shriek, that had startled them; but looking round, they saw no woman—only the Spanish boy, Jacinto, who came flying toward them, uttering cry after cry, as no boy ever did before. It was an apparition so unexpected, that both forgot, for an instant, what was to follow—the one, his imminent danger, and the other, his demoniac vengeance; and before either had recovered, the boy was standing beside Disbrowe, holding out his arms before him, as if he would have interposed that frail barrier to shield his life.

"Spare him—spare him!" cried the boy, in piercing accents. "Oh, Captain Tempest, go; let Captain Tempest go," said Jacinto, faintly, lifting his head for an instant, and then dropping it again.

"Let him go, since the lad desires it," said Disbrowe, after a moment's hesitation.

"I shall be on my guard for the future, and will not be taken at a disadvantage again."

"Very well," said Jacquette, as she fearlessly approached the raving savage; "but first, my dear, I will trouble you for that pistol. Before Lion lets you off the limits, you must stand and deliver."

Captain Nick furiously hurled the pistol at her feet.

"Thank you," said Jacquette, coolly, as she picked up the weapon and examined it.

"Loaded, I see—all right! Here, Lion—here, my boy; let him go!"

With a sullen growl like his angry name-sake, that showed how much against his better judgment he complied, Lion obeyed, and trotted over to the side of his young mistress, still displaying a formidable array of fangs.

"Now, be off at once," shouted Jacquette, in a high, ringing tone of command, as she raised the pistol and kept her bright eye fixed on the outwitted captain. "Vanish, before I am tempted to give you a dose of cold lead, which I would just as lief do, as I don't want to rob the gallows of its due. Be off!"

Grasping his teeth with impotent passion, the captain obeyed—not knowing how soon the dangerous-looking little desperado might be tempted to fire; and a mocking laugh from Jacquette came wafted after him on the evening breeze, and was the last sound he heard, as he vanished round the brow of the hill.

"The youth has fainted again," said Disbrowe, anxiously, as Jacquette, whistling to Lion, stuck the pistol in a belt she wore, and vanished lightly on her horse.

"So much the better," said Jacquette.

"You can ride rapidly now without fear of hurting him—poor fellow! Come, *en avant!*"

Both spirited horses darted off simultaneously, and in less than fifteen minutes the huge monster, that held him as if he was in a vice, and obliged him to relax his hold.

"Hold him, Lion! hold him, my boy!" exclaimed a spirited voice, at the same moment. "That's a good dog! Now, then—what's all this about?"

Disbrowe looked up, and saw, to his astonishment, no other than Miss Jacquette De Vere sitting on her

her, when Jacquette laughingly caught him, and held him back.

"There now! Don't be vexed. Where's the use of getting cross," she said, in a soothing tone, as if speaking to a spoiled child. "I give you my word of honor, as a lady and a De Vere, that you will see him as soon as it is prudent, and you may then go down on your knees and thank him till all's blue. Meantime, I'll faithfully report to him the terrific pitch of gratitude you've worked yourself up to. There's my hand on it! And now sit down and have yourself! That pleasant-spoken gentleman who tried to send you to a better world is Captain Nick Tempest—is it not? 'Old Nick,' as they call him?"

"Yes," said Disbrowe, taking a seat beside her.

"Well, who do you think he reminded me of?"

"Can't say—but I know who he reminds me of. He reminds me of—myself!"

"By Jove! My idea to fracture," said Disbrowe, delightedly, "not that you look alike, but somehow—"

"Yes, but we do look alike, though—I'm certain of it—except that I'm rather better looking. I flatter myself. Haven't we got hair alike, now?"

"Oh! but his is red," said Disbrowe, hesitating, "and yours—"

"Is red, too," said Jacquette.

"Indeed! I thought it was auburn—beautiful auburn," said Disbrowe, in the lazy tone in which he was accustomed to issue little works of fiction.

"Oh, you did—did you?" said Jacquette; "but then you're only an Englishman, and can't be expected to see till it's far in the day, and then you're not half wide-awake. Why, I wouldn't have my hair any other color, on any account. It's a good, high-minded, spirited color, and shows people have decided will of their own; and then it's nice and showy—none of your dismal blacks, nor fady, sickly yellow, nor neutral browns. No, sir, my hair's red, and I'm proud of it!" said Jacquette, shaking her flashing curls from her eyes.

"Well, one thing is certain," said Disbrowe, "you are the first De Vere that ever had red hair, within the memory of man."

"And that's another reason why I'm proud of it. It's time there was a change in the family—they have been going on in the old way long enough, goodness knows! The followers of the Silver Star have been keeping up their obsolete notions long enough, and need a little variety."

"And more bewitching variety they could not have than Miss Jacquette De Vere," said Disbrowe, softly.

"Humph!" said Jacquette, with a peculiar smile. "Let's change the subject. Are you fond of singing, cousin Alfred? I wish you would sing 'Hear me, Norma.' It is a pretty song."

He half sprung from his seat, and fixed his eyes on her, as if he would read her very heart. She met his gaze unflinchingly, and again her laughing gray eyes reminded him of the picture, there was such an immeasurable depth of mockery shining through, and baffling him.

"I heard you whistling it yesterday," she said, carelessly, "and as it is a favorite of mine, I thought perhaps you might favor me now."

"No, I never sing," he said, half-curtly, as he arose again, and began walking up and down.

"Well, I must leave you, then, and return to my patient," she said, rising. "I will see you at the tea-table, and report progress." And, with a smiling wave of her hand, she was gone.

Disbrowe paced up and down the long hall, in deep thought, until the bell rung for the evening meal. There was a half-puzzled, half-angry look on his face; yet now and then, as if in spite of him, his features would relax into a smile, and his last words were, as he turned to join the family: "It's of no use; I can not read the riddle."

"I have a message for you, cousin," said Jacquette, in a low voice, approaching him when the supper was over.

"Well—I am all attention," said Disbrowe.

"It is from him—you know. He says not to distress yourself over-much with gratitude, as he would have done for any one; and as for your thanks, they will keep, and like gooseberry wine, be all the better for keeping. So make yourself easy, cousin mine."

"I intend to," said Disbrowe, throwing himself into a chair. "Capital advice, that, and I intend to follow it. Do you know, when I marry I expect to repose on a couch of rose-leaves all day long, and make my wife fan me and sing—"

"Hear me, Norma!" broke in Jacquette, with a wicked laugh; and Disbrowe colored, and instantly grew silent.

That evening he heard Jacquette sing for the first time, and a superb voice she had. Augusta, too, swept over the keys of the piano with a master hand, at her father's desire; but an automaton would have done it with as much life. If she had been made of marble she could not have sat more white, and cold, and still than she sat before them there.

Later that evening, Jacquette sang an old English ballad, at the earnest solicitation of Disbrowe—an old song, with a sweet, plaintive air—and, lying lazily back, he watched her with half-closed eyes, and listened to the words:

"And when the Christmas tale goes round,
By many a peat fire-side,
The old folks used to shrink to hear
How Childe of Plymstoke died."

And then the song goes on to say how the "Old Tor" went a hunting, and how he lost his way on the moor, and of his despair:

"For far and wide the highland lay
On the barren waste of snow.
He passed—the angry heavens above,
The faithless bog below."

"He passed, and as the sun all his veins
Life's current feebly ran;
And heavily a mortal sleep
Came o'er the dying man."

"Yet one dear wish, one tender thought
Came o'er that hunter brave—"

Jacquette paused, and rose with a laugh. "Well, that's very pretty! Why don't you go on, and let us know what that 'tender thought' was?" said Disbrowe.

"I was just thinking of your getting lost," she replied, "and was afraid you might think the song personal; besides, you have heard enough of old songs, without me singing them to you."

"There are no songs like them," said Disbrowe. "I would rather hear one old ballad than all the Italian songs that ever a *prima donna* trilled and quavered."

"You think too much of old things," said Jacquette, half-pettishly. "Old names, and old families, and old houses, and old

songs, all alike. For my part, I believe in modern improvements and new sensations altogether."

"And yet I am certain you would rather bear the old name of De Vere than any other under the sun," said Disbrowe.

With a gesture that was almost fierce and moved to the other side of the room.

"You are a De Vere, my dear boy, if there ever was one," said his uncle, with a smile. "And will marry a countess, I'll be bound."

"I don't believe there is a countless living I would marry," said Disbrowe, carelessly.

"And why not, pray? A duchess, then," laughed Mr. De Vere.

"Nor a duchess—unless I was in love with her, and she would have me."

"Two very important considerations," said his uncle. "Then you mean to marry for love?"

"I hope so—if I ever do come to that."

"It's an old-fashioned notion!" Is that the reason?" said Jacquette, with a curling lip.

"Partly. If ever I see a woman, my equal in every way, and we happen to love one another in a decent, quiet, gentlemanly and lady-like sort of fashion, it is possible we will get married, as well as the rest of the world."

"What a fortunate woman she will be?" said Jacquette, sarcastically. "Have you ever seen her yet, Captain Disbrowe?"

"Can't say, but I'm very truth, as poor Hood has since sung:

"Under some prodigious ban
Of excommunication."

The old English ivy grew thick and rank around the narrow windows, wrapping it, even when the sun shone, in funeral gloom. All was dark and lonely there, but the strains of music were close at hand, and there no longer remained a doubt but that it came from the interior.

Suddenly, while he watched, a faint, trembling ray of light passed one of the windows. A sudden suspicion shot through his mind of burglars and house-breakers, and a sort of conviction that Captain Tempest or Old Grizzel was in there, flashed upon him. In a twinkling he had grasped a stout ivy stalk, and holding on to the projecting sill, held himself up and looked in.

It was a female carrying a lamp; but was it Grizzel Howlet? Yes—if she had a small, light, airy figure; a fleet, noiseless footstep; a small, delicate face, and waving, curling hair; if she ever wore a dainty, white wrapper, and had a small, snowy hand, sparkling with rich rings. For one instant, the light of the lamp flashed full on the face of her who bore it, and never fell mortal eye on a face so white, so rigid, with such wild, glistening eyes, and hurried, terrified look.

She passed on—all was darkness again; but the instant she disappeared, the music ceased. He held on until his hands were tired; and then he sprung down and paced up and down, restlessly, waiting for the reappearance of that light, till the stars died one by one, out of the sky, and the chill gray dawn came blue and cold over the distant hills; and still it appeared not. And then he re-entered the house, returned to his bedroom, and threw himself cold and chilled, in bed—not to sleep, but to wonder what this midnight visit meant. From its place above him, the pictured face smiled upon him still, but with a meaning in its mockery he had never felt before, and with—oh! such a world of derision in its laughing eyes! Sleeping or waking, would he ever forget the look that white face wore?—that look of mingled horror, loathing, and repulsion, that made it, despite its young beauty, ghastly to look upon—that look on the face of Jacquette De Vere!

CHAPTER X.

A MYSTERY.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
This agony returns;
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

TE ANCIENT MARINER.

All the next day, Jacquette did not make her appearance; she was in the room with their wounded guest, and had her meals brought up. Mr. De Vere and Augusta had not been told of Disbrowe's adventure with Captain Tempest, and they simply knew that a young stranger had broken his arm, and had been brought to Fontelle by Jacquette, and that she had constituted herself his nurse. Once, Mr. De Vere had paid a visit to the sick-room, and had returned to tell Disbrowe he found him sitting up talking to Jacquette, and to marvel at his singular and extraordinary beauty, which was the first thing to strike a beholder, always, on seeing Jacinto. Disbrowe's lip curled as his uncle spoke of the tender care and undenyng attention of his daughter to the Spanish boy.

"I wonder, if this young stranger were being overlooked, because it happened to be born in a hovel; and she has a quick temper, and takes no pains to conceal her feelings on any subject," said Mr. De Vere. "But, as for her momentary irritation, she will quickly get over that, and meet you tomorrow as blithely as ever. One thing, though, I wish you would remember," added the speaker, with a slight smile: "Avoid this subject in her presence. It is like applying a match to a powder-magazine. Augusta, my love, you are not looking well—perhaps you had better retire."

Jacquette does not believe in true merit being overlooked, because it happened to be born in a hovel; and she has a quick temper, and takes no pains to conceal her feelings on any subject," said Mr. De Vere. "And is it really possible my cousin is so red-hot a republican as to be offend at my thoughtless words? I imagined she would have sympathized with me!"

"A fashion, it seems, no one else is to have," thought Disbrowe. Then, aloud: "And is it really possible my cousin is so red-hot a republican as to be offend at my thoughtless words? I imagined she would have sympathized with me!"

"I intend to," said Disbrowe, throwing himself into a chair. "Capital advice, that, and I intend to follow it. Do you know, when I marry I expect to repose on a couch of rose-leaves all day long, and make my wife fan me and sing—"

"Hear me, Norma!" broke in Jacquette, with a wicked laugh; and Disbrowe colored, and instantly grew silent.

That evening he heard Jacquette sing for the first time, and a superb voice she had. Augusta, too, swept over the keys of the piano with a master hand, at her father's desire; but an automaton would have done it with as much life. If she had been made of marble she could not have sat more white, and cold, and still than she sat before them there.

Later that evening, Jacquette sang an old English ballad, at the earnest solicitation of Disbrowe—an old song, with a sweet, plaintive air—and, lying lazily back, he watched her with half-closed eyes, and listened to the words:

"And when the Christmas tale goes round,
By many a peat fire-side,
The old folks used to shrink to hear
How Childe of Plymstoke died."

And then the song goes on to say how the "Old Tor" went a hunting, and how he lost his way on the moor, and of his despair:

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He passed—the angry heavens above,
The faithless bog below."

"He passed, and as the sun all his veins
Life's current feebly ran;
And heavily a mortal sleep
Came o'er the dying man."

"Yet one dear wish, one tender thought
Came o'er that hunter brave—"

earthly, was there, and all bearing tokens of a skillful hand.

"Ugh!" said Disbrowe, replacing them hastily, "it's enough to give me the nightmare for a month to look at those ghastly, weird things. Upon my honor, I believe that girl is uncanny, as the Scotch say; no reasonable Christian, unless suffering agonies of remorse or dyspepsia, could ever fancy such goblin sights. How well she does it, too! What doesn't she do well, though?" She rides like an Amazon; she plays and sings like an Italian *prima donna*; she draws like Salvator Rossi; she nurses like—like herself; and she loves and hates—well, I can't say about that, but I should think she could do both in stunning fashion. I shall begin to feel half-afraid of the witch, she is so clever. Heigho! this is an awful slow piece of business, loitering about here. I have a good mind to break my arm, and see if she would nurse me like this. Ten to one she would never come near me, but leave me to the tender mercies of that frigid iceberg, Lady Augusta; for she's as full of streaks as a tulip!" And yawning drearily.

Toward evening, he rode out with Frank for a couple of hours, admired the scenery, took a random shot or two at a bird, and returned to tea, hoping and wishing that he might see Jacquette. But Jacquette did not appear; and, more disappointed than he would have been willing to acknowledge, he retired, at last. He feared he had angered her, and he wanted a reconciliation. He wondered how she would meet him next; whether with her piquant, saucy smile, or with fiery eyes and burning cheeks, as he had seen her last. But he could not answer the question; for never was an April day half so sickly as she.

"Beat!" she shouted, as she took off her plumed riding-hat and waved it exultingly above her head, "beat! hurrah!"

Disbrowe had sat frozen with horror to his seat, at the mad leap, and saw with a shudder her horse's hind feet grazed the very edge of the frightful chasm! But at her victorious shout, the danger was forgotten, and the blood rushed in a torrent to his very temples.

"Ha! ha! A De Vere against a Disbrowe, any day," laughed Jacquette, on the other side, as she reined up her panting steed. "It's the old story of America against England again, and America is victorious! Hurrah for the stars and stripes! I say, cousin Alfred, how do you find yourself?" And she leaned back and laughed immoderately at his mortified face.

"Conquered," said Disbrowe, taking off his hat and bowing with courtly grace, "but I only imitate the example of all the rest of mankind, in being conquered by you."

"That's very pretty, indeed," said Jacquette; "but still it doesn't cover the disgrace of being beaten—and by a girl, too. Oh, cousin Alfred! I thought better things of you than this. It is well for you your lady-love is not here, to witness your defeat."

"I wish I could induce you to bear that title, my dauntless little cousin," said Disbrowe, gallantly.

"No, thank you. I had rather be excused. I shouldn't admire being the lady-love of any one I could beat so easily," said Jacquette.

"As you are strong, be merciful," said Disbrowe, riding slowly up to where the chasm narrowed, and leaping across; "but you don't call that an easy victory, do you? One inch further, and where would you be now?"

"In heaven, very likely," said Jacquette, measuring the distance with her eye. "To tell the truth, it's a leap I wouldn't attempt in my cooler moments; but I forgot every thing in the excitement of the race, and would have taken it even had I been sure of being dashed to the bottom. Who wouldn't prefer death to defeat?" she said, with a flashing eye.

"Well, I, for one," said Disbrowe, in his customary careless tone. "I have an unlimited amount of faith in the old maxim—

"He that fights and runs away,
May live to fight another day."

"Your countrymen seem to believe unanimously in that," said Jacquette, with one of her sly, provoking glances: "they ought to have it inscribed under the lion and unicorn, and on all their banners; for it was their motto constantly, until they got their walking-papers from these American shores."

"There was some pretty hard fighting first," said Disbrowe, nettled. "Your American friends didn't have things all their own way, and had a pretty long reckoning to pay, in the end. A set of ragamuffins, fresh from the plow—one-half of them—who hardly knew even what they were fighting for!"

" Didn't they?" said Jacquette. "That's all you know about it. They fought for God and their country; your friends for—a shilling a day!"

An angry reply rose to Disbrowe's lips, and then remembering he was speaking to a lady, he checked himself, and gave his horse a cut with his whip, that sent him on some yards in advance before he could stop himself. Jacquette looked after him; and the old tantalizing, malicious smile he had learned to know so well, now curled her pretty lips.

"You'll spoil that fine gray, if you use him like that," she said, as she again joined him; "what did the poor thing do to merit that? You ought to have laid it over my shoulders, instead."

"I beg your pardon, Miss Jacquette; but really, I forgot myself sometimes; and you are—if you'll excuse my saying it—given to saying things not calculated to soothe sensitive minds, and—"

"You're proud, and got a shocking bad temper, and are not used to be talked to in such a fashion," interrupted Jacquette. "Well, cousin Alf, I've seen people when they had pain in one place, applying a blister to another, as a counter-irritant; and so, if you will look upon me as a human blister, sent on earth for your especial use and benefit, you will be apt sooner to obtain the virtue of resignation, which, together with patience

"Not exactly, Miss Jacquette; for the very serious reason that I very much doubt whether you have a heart at all."

"Because I am insensible to the manifold attractions and fascinations of the Honorable Alfred Disbrowe, and have not fallen down at his feet and worshiped, as so many of my sensible and lovable sex have already done? Is that the reason?" she said, with a short laugh.

"Not at all," said Disbrowe; but it was so near the truth that he had to laugh, too.

"You do not suppose I have such an inordinate share of vanity as to imagine I could ever touch your heart?"

"Well, there's no saying. I think it very

likely you could stretch your faith even to a pinnacle so absurdly high as that. Men are

such a set, composed of vanity and whiskers,

every mother's son of 'em!" said Jacquette.

"A sweeping assertion, that. And am I

set down in that catalogue?" said Disbrowe.

"You? Oh, well, I don't know. I haven't taken the trouble to think about it yet," said Jacquette, in a tone of provoking indifference. "It is probable that if ever I do, such will be my decision. But look there—and she pointed with her whip—"there is the very Queen of the Kelpies, taking an airing!"

Disbrowe looked, and saw, to his surprise, the little girl Orrie, of the lone house, bounding, flying, leaping, with the agility of a mountain kid, over the rocks—her long, effish locks unbound, and streaming around her little effish face with its supernaturally large, bright, glittering black eyes.

"Hello! little Oriole, by all that's startling. Where did that little Witch of Endor start from? I say, Orrie, Orrie! Come here."

The little girl heard his shout, and, turning round, shaded her eyes with her hand from the sun, and peered at him; then, with a glad cry of recognition, she darted over the rocks, and in an instant had seized the stirrup, swung herself up before him on his horse, flung her arms around his neck, and gave the astonished and laughing young Englishman a crushing hug.

"Upon my word," said Jacquette, "an enthusiastic welcome."

Orie turned round and peered at Jacquette, and laughed, and nodded, and clung closer to Disbrowe.

"And so you are glad to see me, Orie?" said Disbrowe, still laughing. "Where in the world did you drop from on these bare rocks? Not from the sky?"

"Lor', no!" said Orie, in contempt at the idea. "Old Grizelle whipped me, and I ran off—I always do, when she whips me, the ugly old thing. I shan't go back, either, till it's dark."

"Well, won't she whip you again, then?" said Disbrowe.

"No—Uncle Till won't let her. He'll be there, and he likes me. I wish you would give me a ride on your horse. Will you?"

"Certainly," said Disbrowe, moving on. "Why, Orie, I thought you had forgotten all about me ere this."

"I guess I hain't," said Orie, soberly, turning round to give him another kiss, and then clapping her hands to make the horse go faster. "I've been thinking about you ever since. Oh! what a nice horse to go this is!"

"And you have no kindly greeting for me, Orie?" said Jacquette. "Is he to receive all your attention?"

"Oh," said Orie, "everybody says you don't care for anybody, and don't want kisses or nothin'!"

"And so, because I don't care for anybody, no one is to love me?" said Jacquette, in something so like a sorrowful tone that Disbrowe looked at her, surprised at her heeding the little elf's words.

He spoke to her, but she replied briefly; and for nearly half an hour she rode beside them in silence, and with a sort of dark gloom shadowing her face.

Little Orie prattled continually, giving Disbrowe occasional embraces to fill up the pauses, until Jacquette almost coldly suggested their return.

"There now, Orie, will you be able to find your way back, do you think?" said Disbrowe, as she sprang down in a flying leap.

"Be sure I will," said Orie. "Good-by. I'll come to see you, some day."

"Thank you," said the young gentleman, laughing.

And the next instant she was bounding and hopping like a blackbird from rock to rock.

The same look of dark gloom still lay on the bright face of Jacquette, as they turned toward Fontelle; and until half the way was over, she never spoke, save to briefly answer his questions. At last he said:

"You seem strangely out of spirits, my dear cousin. May I ask what is the matter?"

"I am thinking of that child and her words," said Jacquette. "Somehow, the sight of that little girl always affects me strangely; something in those eerie black eyes of hers almost frightens me. A strange feeling, is it not? I wish you could tell me what it means."

"I wish I could," said Disbrowe. "Perhaps she is your spiritual affinity, whatever that is. Frank says she looks like you."

"Who don't I look like?" said Jacquette, looking up and breaking into a laugh. "I am the image of Captain Nick Tempest and little Orie Howlet, and, consequently, a cross between a demon and a goblin. I won't think of it, though; and now, that being gone, I am myself again. I'll race you home, Cousin Alfred, or have you had enough of racing for one while?"

"No—I must have my revenge, and retrieve my wounded honor. So lead off!"

With a laugh and a cheer, Jacquette started, and both galloped on over "brake, bush and scar," at a reckless, headlong pace, keeping neck and neck until Fontelle was reached.

Captain Adams has in his "seven years in the wilderness," accumulated a vast fund for future labor as a romance writer, as well as for a narrative of fact that will be read with intense interest. This narrative we hope to lay before our readers. Writing as the Hunter-Author does, exclusively for the SATURDAY JOURNAL, we can promise readers good things from his pen, which will largely add to his already brilliant reputation.

Incorrect Correspondence.—A source of surprise is the large number of ill-educated men occupying leading positions in our business houses. Almost every day letters pass under our notice bearing the imprint of prominent firms, which are so ungrammatical and crude in composition as to show either that the members of the firm are themselves ignorant, or remarkably indifferent to the manner in which their assistants do their work.

This is elicited by a note before us from a

THE Saturday Journal

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 9, 1871.

The Saturday Journal is sold by all News-sellers in the United States and in the Canadian Dominion. Parties unable to obtain it from a news-seller, or those preferring to have the paper sent direct, by mail, from the publication office, are supplied at the following rates:

Terms to Subscribers:

One copy, four months \$1.00

Two copies, one year \$5.00

In orders for subscriptions be careful to give address in full—State and City and Town. The paper is always stopped, promptly, at expiration of subscription.

Subscriptions can start with any required back number. The paper is always in print, so that those wishing for special stories can easily to show how grateful we are for the consideration that their failure to do so, ought to result in their rejection as assistants at the desk.

At Commercial Correspondents, and letters on business, should be addressed to

BEADLE AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,

98 WILLIAM ST., NEW YORK.

leading retail dry-goods house of this city, evidently written by their "regular correspondent," but which is almost destitute of punctuation, correct use of capitals and propriety of expression. We have but one remark to offer and that is, that ignorance of grammar, and of the properties of composition, should disqualify any person for the position of bookkeeper or general correspondent. Young men who strive to fill such positions can so readily qualify themselves in composition that their failure to do so, ought to result in their rejection as assistants at the desk.

Appreciation.—A word of praise sometimes is a great inspiration to effort. We have so many letters like the following, that we ought to produce the best of all the weeklies to show how grateful we are for the consideration bestowed upon us:

"Your paper, the best published, is skinned several times in our family. Every one likes it, from my father to my smallest sister. I do not like to praise any one author in particular where all are so good, but I will say, etc., etc."

As we aim to make our JOURNAL a household favorite such letters give assurance that we have pursued the proper course—have chosen the proper writers and material, and have given it the proper tone. It shall, hereafter, as heretofore, be our aim to increase upon the excellencies attained, and we shall be disappointed, indeed, not to have it said that the SATURDAY JOURNAL is the hearth and home paper, *par excellence*, among all the popular weeklies.

Woman's Power.—Mrs. Hepsey Heart-sick sends the following:

"I know a woman, pale and slight, with a heart in her bosom, cold, Who often walks throughout the night To earn her husband's food—

White hair, in strength of manhood's power,

Some gay satoon will seek And spend more money in an hour Than she earns in a week."

and wants to know "how long will such things be?" Just as long, my dear, as women are fools enough to marry men who tippie and frequent bar-rooms. If the girls would say a curt "No" to every young man who upholds or even indorses the drinking of liquor, there would be not only an avoidance of much misery but the saving of many a young man from the wine-cup. If the women of the land were to set their faces, like steel, against men who tasted, or dealt in liquor, the end of the traffic could be seen. That is our opinion.

But with the Red Rajah there is another element of interest especially captivating—that of the Child of the Wreck, the beautiful Marguerite, and of her friend the brave young Claude Peyton, the American, who, in nerve and spirit, is the toll to the great Rajah.

The romance gives us a fine idea of the East, its customs and people, at a date, only one generation since, when the pirates of those seas were really monsters dreaded by the commerce of the world.

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SATURDAY JOURNAL.

5

THE PRAIRIE AND THE OCEAN.

BY S. M. FRAZIER.

Far away in the West, the distant West,
Where clouds roll over the prairie land,
Where the soft, bright rays of the setting sun
Strike hill and vale with velvet and gold;
There Nature rules in beauty supreme,
Surpassing the poet's most gorgeous dream.
Where the broad plain rolls far away from view,
Each swell clothed in a carpet of green,
Bright flowers peep forth in bushes and snow,
Kissed into life, yet modest in mien—
Lips drooping with dew from above—
Emblems of purity—symbols of love.
Like the ocean, the ocean, the ocean,
Lighted by scores of phosphoric gems,
The green prairie rolls away to the West.
Starred by thousands of flowering stems;
Like the floral glimmer of the ocean crest.
Alike—ah, and yet how unlike they are!
Restless ocean, the sport of the storm;
Where the inhabitants shrink from the war,
And hide far down in the sheltering bower.
From wind-tossed wave and the thunder's roar,
Where seething surf lashes the rocky shore.
But storms also sweep the prairie at times.
When the wild wind escapes from his cells,
When darkness and gloom envelop the earth;
When the heated air with moisture swells;
When the fierce, red bolt leaps forth from his lair,
And the thunder rocks on the trembling air.
Away down in the tempest-tossed sea,
Her oarsmen are sheltered from harm;
While the surface groans 'neath the storm-king's
breath.
In her depths below reigns a calm.
But where is found for the bird of the plain,
A safe retreat from the wind and the rain?

The Flaming Talisman:

THE UNFULFILLED VOW.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR., ETC.

AUTHOR OF "THE BLACK CRESCENT," "HOODWINKED," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

THE UGLY CONFERENCE.

A—more of mystery—
The solemn hour
Of darkness's right—
Saw fees received in power;
To plot the blow of rival's hateful guile—
To rob a lover of a lover's smile.

—A. P. M. JR.

As Herwin Reese spoke, the hag's manner altered, somewhat, to a blunt welcome.

He brushed past her, and, without waiting until she had closed the door, continued on to a room beyond, where he threw himself into a chair.

The apartment wore an aspect of comfort and luxury combined, with every conceivable appurtenance to the furniture of a thoroughly-arranged bed-chamber.

It was the sleeping-room of Meg Semper. When she had re-bolted, re-locked and barred the door, she joined him.

"Ha!" she cried, striding up to him, and bending down to peer closely into his face; "what brings you here now? Do you know it's long after midnight? You're gloomy, too. You won't speak. Tell me what's wrong? Hey?" and her voice, at first loud, harsh, chattering, settled to a low hiss of inquiry.

"What's the matter, I say? And you came in bareheaded! Devils I speak out!"

"I am driven to madness!" suddenly cried the valet, with such vehemence that Meg Semper started back from her stooping posture.

Heigho!—distending her eyes, and throwing her brows into the shape of an inverted triangle—"you're mad, eh? So you look like it. Now, what are you mad about?"

Reese began pacing the room,

"Every thing!" he muttered, between his grinding teeth.

"Oho! 'every thing' is a good deal.

Now, sit down. What is it?"

He resumed his chair and said, more calmly.

"Nemil delivered the letter to-day—"

"He did! He did! Yes—and I've got the money."

"Father and son have had a quarrel, in consequence—"

"Good! Ha! h—a! That's what we want."

"Mervin Darnley, it seems, has learned much of his son's recent habits, and the letter was as a lighted match to the magazine. I was called in to-night to give testimony."

"That's good, too! Well?"

"Of course I told all I knew." His eyes glittered, venomously, and Meg Semper chuckled lowly.

"But," he added, "the culmination of the affair is, I've been discharged."

"Eh? That's bad," she commented, frowning.

"More—I was kicked from the house."

"What?" yelled Meg Semper, the frown upon her wrinkled forehead deepening to a scowl.

"Ay, with a kick and a blow, I was knocked from the steps to the middle of the street. O—h! curses—curses!" and his hands clenched till the nails sunk in the flesh.

"Who did it? Who did it?" hissed, cried, snarled the hag, her eyes snapping fiercely, and her features distorting in excitement.

"Reginald Darnley—curse him!"

"Reginald Darnley!" she fairly howled; "and he did it—he kicked you? By Satan!—and I had him at my knife-point only this night!"

"What do you mean?"

"He would have killed him then; but the Talisman saved his life, as it has done twice before. I'm mad with thinking of the 'curse' thing!"

"Orle used it?"

"Yes. Who else? But there's only three left, now—only three! When they're gone, too, nothing can prevent me keeping my oath! And I'll keep it sooner, unless she watches me close—I will."

"I think it's better to follow my plan, Meg," he said, studiously.

"But it may take too long—that's all. Devils a-loose! My oath was to kill him. If you want to do it your way, then keep him out of my sight. I can't think of anything but killing him, when I see him." Her mouth twitched nervously, her eyes were ablaze with a demon look.

"Don't work yourself into a frenzy."

"I can't help it. I'll have his life—I will!—it's my oath!"

"Not if I can prevent it!" interrupted a voice.

Orle Deice stood in the doorway. "Thought you'd gone to bed?" screamed the hag, in surprise.

"I heard a knock," said Orle, advancing, "and was curious to know who it could be. Besides, you are talking in a voice to rouse the dead. It is fortunate that this house stands alone, and again fortunate that the walls are thick—or you would have some

one searching out the cause of such disturbance. What brings you here, Herwin Reese?"

"Orle!" His eyes were fixed upon her in a passionate gaze; his mien softened.

"Tell me what brings you here?" she repeated, as he hesitated while studying her charms.

"I am discharged."

"Discharged?"

"Yes, Orle; and have been kicked from the house of the Darnleys."

"Kicked! What for?"

"Because—" A quick, warning glance from Meg Semper checked him; and the hag spoke:

"Yes, Orle Deice, Herwin had to tell of your lover's bad habits—that's all. And Reginald has kicked him out for 't!'" Here she burst into a loud, sepulchral laugh, but added, immediately:

"And, Herwin, her lover's give her the mitt! He's left her! Ha! h—a! There's a row now. She hates him some, I guess. What are you going to do, Orle Deice?"

"No, Meg Semper, I do not hate him. I still love him. He is still mine. But, stop this! You ask me what I shall do. It is partly that question which brings me here. You say Nemil is in bed?"

"Nemil? Yes—obstinate tiger!—he wouldn't stop to take his wine, he was so tired when he came in."

"Wake him up."

"Ho! Wake him up? But you'll have him mad!"

"No matter. I must see him at once, while my bosom is warm with hate for this girl—Cecilia Bernard!"

"Ha! money?" quickly ejaculated the negro, while his eyes shone greedily.

assassin who lurks within a gloomy forest, to waylay the unconscious traveler, so do you wait to vent, from concealment, the venom of your hate! Say no more to me of love, or—I shall despise you! Hush!—here they come!"

Meg Semper returned at that juncture, accompanied by the party called Nemil.

He was an African of towering build, bristling, bearded front, scowling, hang-dog visage, and muscular frame. His face was black as lamp-smoke and of vengeful expression; his eyes were bloodshot and of brutal glance; his voice was of a guttural baritone.

In no very good-humor at being aroused from a sound sleep, he preceded Meg, with long strides, and glared at the two who seemed awaiting his coming.

"Well," he snarled, "what do you wake me up at this time for?"

"A matter of business, Nemil," returned Orle, authoritatively.

But her tone was far from quieting, for he exclaimed, with a savage growl and a grunt:

"Business be cursed! I'm tired. Can't keep on my feet for all time—nor can anybody else! D'you know that?"

"Tush, Nemil! you're an ass!" cried Meg.

"Talk better to Orle."

"But," spoke the valet, who—though he had not the remotest idea what Orle wanted of the African, yet, despite her recent treatment of him, was eager to sustain her—sought to soothe him, "we thought you were fond of money."

"Ha! money?" quickly ejaculated the negro, while his eyes shone greedily.

And by this act did the manufacturer seek to cleanse the sullied page.

"Disowned! Disowned!" groaned Reginald, hoarsely. "God! what am I to do?"

An hour after learning of his home-exile, the young man was seated in a quiet restaurant, at breakfast.

He had immediately left the house, collecting what ready money he could count, and with a desperate spirit, braced himself to face the world, alone, without that shelter which had opened to him, always, from birth to manhood.

As he sipped the warm coffee, his fine, dark eyes seemed to have lost much of their wonted brilliancy; his face was pale, dejected, in expression.

After securing rooms, he walked out to the busy street, and turned—he cared not whether.

The noisy hum of business on every side did not arouse him from his meditations, as, with head hung, he pursued an indefinite course.

Unknowingly, he wandered from the liveliest sections—presently, he became aware that he was followed.

Gleaming back, he saw an aged woman approaching, with a basket on her arm. Something in her appearance struck him. He halted. In a few seconds she came up.

"Ha! h—a! Reginald Darnley, we've met again, eh?"

There was no mistaking that voice; it was the fiend-visaged hag, Meg Semper.

She dropped the basket; her hand sought the murderous knife that was secreted in the folds of her dress.

Shuddering, he glanced quickly about him; not a soul in sight. He was almost in the suburbs of the city. The thoroughfare was lonely, deserted; and on the ominous stillness arose the hum of the distant market.

"I did tell you I was going to be your death!" cried the hag, advancing upon him.

How strange the fascination of those basilisk eyes! They held him riveted in a horrible magnetism.

"Ha! h—a! you're doomed. Prepare! My oath!—my oath!"

Thrills of ineffable horror, quick and startling to the nerves, flashed through his system; his mouth twitched, his hands worked convulsively, great beads of sweat started out upon his brow; alarming chills shot through his veins; his eyes were fixed staringly on the creature who menaced him, while all strength froze upon his muscles—left him powerless, dismayed.

Was it to be a murder, in broad daylight, upon the public street!

"Doomed, Reginald Darnley!—doomed!"

Suddenly there was the rustle of a dress, the wind of a swiftly passing figure; something quivered for an instant before the hag's eyes—a small, white hand and wrist, with the single tongue of flame—the *Talisman*!

Meg Semper uttered a half-smothered

howl of rage, and wheeled around in time to see the figure of a woman, with long dark hair floating in waves about her shoulders as she sped away.

Reginald was released from the horrible charm, and, with an indescribable sense of dread, he turned and fled from the spot.

Meg Semper gazed after the female figure, and if she had had teeth, they would have been pulverized in the fierce working of the mouth, as she uttered:

"By Satan! I thought the girl was safe at home. How'd she get on my heels so quick, eh? She said, last night, she'd prevent my doing it, if she could. She watches me close. Only for the 'curst Talisman, I'd had his life! And on the street, or anywhere. It's my oath! But, now, there's only two left! Ha! h—a! only two more—only two more! And when they're gone, then—ha! ha! ha! he must die, anyhow. Nothing can save him!" and with this, she recovered her basket and moved away.

His father knew all—knew that he was a gambler, a card-player, mingling with the herding wretches who comprise the flashy, dare-devil portion of a community—only one grade above the common "rough," and with no aim, no ambition, beyond the excitement of "Tiger."

The note purporting to have come from Orle Deice had fed the flame of irritation; though he could not believe the beautiful girl, who professed such love for him, would thus create so dangerous a discord.

The affair was one of mystery to him.

His handsome face flushed, paled, then flushed again, as he meditated upon the probable consequences pending. What action would his father take? He was too stern, too sensitive in the family honor, to

calmly brook the casting of a stain upon it.

Then the young man's cheek whitened as he thought of another thing: what if Reginald should disown him? If such happened, what had the future in store?—poverty, degradation; for Reginald's winnings at the bazaar table were equibalance to his losses, and, therefore, a meager, if any, resource lay in this.

Though educated for society, he was without a trade. Would his friends aid him? Were there those among his "Bohemian" acquaintances—his card-tricking, dice-bantering, "sharp"-playing associates—who would lend him a helping hand?

Thus ruminating, he fell asleep.

He did not awake from his sound, though restless, slumber until nine o'clock next morning, and would have slept much later had there not been a loud rap at his door.

A servant presented a note.

Trembling with agitation, he tore open the epistle. As he perused the lines, all color fled from his cheeks, he staggered and clutched the mantel-piece for support, his knees grew weak and his brain dizzy.

"Business be cursed! I'm tired. Can't keep on my feet for all time—nor can anybody else! D'you know that?"

"Tush, Nemil! you're an ass!" cried Meg.

"Talk better to Orle."

"But," spoke the valet, who—though he had not the remotest idea what Orle wanted of the African, yet, despite her recent treatment of him, was eager to sustain her—sought to soothe him, "we thought you were fond of money."

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He

tresses at his shoulder. Quickly averting her eyes, she said:

"You draw too abrupt an inference."

The evasive words were lost upon him.

"Your hand trembles on my arm—Cecilia."

"Trembles—"

"Yes, I am satisfied now. Come—I have fixed my resolve; listen—"

"Let us return to the house, Mr. Waldron."

"And disappoint the birds that sing now, for your especial pleasure? How ungenerous that would be! Here is a seat. Sit down; I beg."

She yielded to his request, though seeming anxious to avoid what was pending. She knew what was eager to escape his lips, knew that he would whisper words of love and devotion; the quick perception of a cultivated mind had discovered this.

"Miss Bernard—Cecilia," he said, presently; "it's now over six months since I became a visitor at your father's house. During that time, I have learned to love you. It is of that love I would speak."

"Your love, Mr. Waldron?" with a slight start, and voice not so even as it might have been.

"Yes," interrupted, fervently. "Now, will you not let me plead this love? My every hope is centered—"

"Hush!"—her voice low, and manner of that one ill at ease—"do not speak of this, Mr. Waldron—do not."

"Nay, listen, while I tell you how dear you are to me; while I tell you what life will be to me without you—"

"No, no; cease. I can not—I have no right to listen!"

Their gaze was one; their eyes volumed that sweet, subtle power which links hearts in a bond of mutual affection.

But there was an unrest in her glance; something marred the pleasure of her thoughts.

Then, yielding to the warmth that swelled each fiber of her system, she pillow'd her head upon his breast.

"Let me know my fate, darling. But should I ask?—I see you are already mine—speak; am I right?"

"I—do love—oh! no; no; what am I saying? I must not love you."

"Must not! In Heaven's name!—I asked too late for that which I so fondly hoped to call my own? Unsay those words, Cecilia."

"No; no; I must not love—and yet—"

"Ah, yet?"

"I do love you, for my heart will have it so!"

Her words were quick, short-breathed; the luster of her eyes was dimmed; there was a sob in her voice, which only a painful effort could restrain.

In a passionate impulse, he drew her unresisting form closer to him, and felt the fair frame quiver in his embrace.

Quickly, however, she disengaged herself, as if ashamed of the part she had acted, and started to her feet.

"I forgot myself!" she exclaimed, in confusion. "Let us retire to the house at once."

"No, not forgotten yourself, but told me that I have won your heart. I am not fully answered, yet. Your hand now, Cecilia—will you give it, also?"

"Do not press this subject, Mr. Waldron. Come; please return to the house."

"Will you not give me a definite answer?" he persisted, mildly.

"You are cruel. I have begged you to desist."

As they retraced their steps along the gravel path, he asked:

"Why do you evade me in this, Cecilia?"

"Because it is my duty."

"Duty? Why, if your heart is given, do you refuse the answer which I believe is justly due? Will you tell me this?"

"No." The reply was low, but firm.

"Will you not confide in me? Tell me why, how you love, and will not plight a lover's troth."

"I have nothing to confide, Mr. Waldron."

"But you love me?"

"Yes," was the soft, impulsive answer, and the weight on his arm grew heavier.

A thrill of joy passed over him; but it was doomed to an abrupt dispelment, for she added:

"It must end there. I am wrong in admitting it, and you must forget it. I can never be your wife."

For a second, he was dumb.

"Love me as you do!" he exclaimed; "and can not, will not be my wife? In the name of Heaven!—what mystery is this?"

"Mr. Waldron—cease—show mercy. Do not rend my heart by continuing this conversation."

"But, tell me what you mean. Will you not give me what you mean?"

"I can not! I can not!"

He was silent. How strange it seemed to him, that he could possess the fair girl's love, hear her, in unmistakable syllables, declare a reciprocation of his affection, yet hear of an impediment to their marriage.

What mysterious power limited the heart and action to attest a love, while it compelled the lips to utter impossibility of holy union.

When they reached the steps leading to the vine-clad porch, she would have retained his arm; but he halted.

"Cecilia, I must bid you good-day."

"So soon!"—quickly, and surprised.

"I have already stayed too long. Pleasant dreams by day and night, until we meet again," though his voice was broken, dispirited.

She must have seen how keen his disappointment; she must have felt anxious, for she detained him, to say, while she looked roundly up into his face:

"Harry, we part friends, do we not? You will come again—soon? Oh! if you did but know how terrible it is for me to learn your love, to return that love, yet be unable to bestow my hand!—you are not angry?"

"I can not so far forget that I am a gentleman, Cecilia."

An emotion worked within his breast as he listened to her words—so full of love and yet so wounding. His lips moved, as if to plead anew the cause which seemed hopeless; he would have clasped her to him. But, with a mighty effort, he refrained.

Another parting word, a bow that was distant, even icy, and he departed.

A few steps, and he looked back. She stood where he had left her, her face buried in her hands, and a low sobbing reached his ears.

Should he return. Irresolute, he paused; the next instant he passed on, out at the rose-twined gate.

Cecilia stood, for a long time, solitary and weeping.

From the interchange of loving words, the soft sigh, the fond caress, the magnet-touch of lip to lip—from these we know that her heart was given to Henry Waldron. Given wholly? Wait.

When the tear-dimmed eyes had partially regained their former lustre, and the heavy bosom was schooled to cease its throbbing, she glanced toward the gate, half expecting to see him lingering there, waiting for a sign, a murmured "come," that would recall him. But he was gone.

Slowly, sadly she turned from the spot and entered the house.

Alone in the privacy of her room, the anguish of a fettered spirit asserted itself.

She advanced to a small casket on a table near her bedside, and drew forth two daguerreotypes. As she gazed upon them, her sobbing grew more violent.

"Oh, God!" she moaned, "tell me my own heart. Tell me—tell me, which of these do I love best?" They fell from her hand, and, sinking back upon her bed, she buried her face in the downy pillow, as if to shut from her vision that which caused her misery.

The two pictures were Henry Waldron and Reginald Darnley—the latter her affianced; though she knew not the true character of the man to whom her hand was pledged.

Her heart leaned equally toward each—he loved both Waldron and Darnley in that depth of Heaven-wrought passion alone consonant with the fervor of a pure, guileless woman. And this her misery: knowing that she loved one as the other—perhaps Darnley a little less than when she had given him a lover's promise.

At the dinner-hour, Lacy Bernard and his wife missed the sunny presence of their child.

A servant was dispatched up-stairs, who returned with the information that Cecilia had fainted.

Mrs. Bernard sought her daughter. She knew that the rosy tinge was gone from her cheeks, knew she was not well.

Cecilia would not speak her secret.

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SATURDAY JOURNAL

7

but the man's quiet indifference recalled him to himself.

"What do you propose?"

"I want you to get her here to the mill. I know its crannies of old. There are snug corners enough, which, with a little work, will answer the purpose and be tight as a trap."

Peters stiffened at the suggestion, until his sinewy frame was rigid as cast steel.

"I can't have a woman's eyes and tongue agog here," he said, sullenly. "Make it any other crib, and I'm your man."

"There's not another such a place in the country," Reginald declared. "It will be but for a few days, Peters, and I pledge myself that nothing to your detriment shall come through it. Come, I'll make it well worth your while. Say a hundred dollars for getting her here, and as much more for the time she stays. You'll not soon make another two hundred so easily."

"The pay's good enough," Luke said, slowly. "He was thinking to himself. "Why not? It may be the means of saving her? A woman might cheer her up—anyway, it will do no harm."

So he said, aloud:

"If you agree to see me safely through, I'll do as well by you. It's a bargain, then! Who is the bit of dimity I am to secure for you?"

"It is Miss Ellesford, of the Grange. Remember, my man, you are to treat her with every respect!"

He then proceeded to give a minute description of Adria's personal appearance and daily habits. He left Peters to decide upon his own course in accomplishing the abduction.

"To-morrow night, if possible," he concluded. "I have a reason for wishing to hasten the affair."

This reason at that moment lay in his pocket, in shape of a note from Hastings. It announced his return to Crofton, and his intention of presenting a speedy appearance at the Grange. He had received no replies to his numerous letters, but attributed this fact to his own uncertain locations.

While Reginald, yet lingered, there came the sound of horse's hoofs borne down from the beaten bridle-path. With a last, hasty word, he plunged into a thicket of scrubby undergrowth, making his way homeward over the barren fields. A moment later his father, Colonel Templeton, drew rein almost upon the very spot he had so lately quitted.

Coincidences are of not rare occurrence. Plotting and counter-plotting frequently defeat each other unawares.

Strangely enough, Colonel Templeton, though actuated by entirely opposite motives, was here upon the self-same mission that had brought his son.

"She must be removed," he had said to Valeria. Who so well fitted to undertake the task as his old ally, Luke Peters? What place so well calculated to furnish secure shelter, yet remain free of suspicion, as the ruined old mill?

(To be continued—Continued in No. 85.)

OLD GRIZZLY,
The Bear-Tamer:
OR, THE
WILD HUNTRESS OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

BY CAPT. J. F. C. ADAMS,
AUTHOR OF "THE PIRATE," "THE ROYAL FALCON," "THE BLACKFOOT
QUEEN;" OR, "OLD NICK WHIFFLES IN
THE VALLEY OF DEATH," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.
THE TEST.

"THIS way, quick!" cried Old Grizzly, catching the huntress' hand, and darting off through the bushes.

Alfred Badger, supporting Silver Tongue, closely followed, while the rear was brought up by Hammond and Leaping Elk, who appeared determined to stand by his new friends.

As the last left the rock, the sound of the advancing warriors' feet could be plainly heard as they dashed over the hard, level ground that lay between the village and the rendezvous.

Since the first alarm no yell had been uttered, but this only rendered the danger greater as the fugitives could not tell in what direction to expect the attack.

They were men not easily daunted by seemingly imminent danger.

Knowing every inch of the ground, Old Grizzly led the way, not only with absolute certainty, but by the nearest cuts and turns, so as to gain as much time as possible.

As long as they could keep within the ravine, there was no chance of discovery, but the rider will remember that it only ran a comparatively short distance of the way that must be traversed.

From the ravine they must emerge upon the open prairie, and there, they knew, discovery was almost certain.

"Hyer, take the woman," said the bear-tamer to the Avenger. "You an' the boyee wi' the gal push on ahead. Make for the timber below my ranch, mind, below it, an' then feel yur' way up under kiver. As to yur," he said, turning to Leaping Elk, "you jess scot out this. Yur can't do no good, an' ef yur people find out that yur've been helpin' us, thar'll be catamounts to pay."

Always thoughtful of others, even in such an emergency, the bear-tamer sought to save the lad from harm, and we may say here that he succeeded, for Leaping Elk got back to the village undetected.

When this disposition had been made, Old Grizzly bade the others push ahead, while he tried to divert attention to himself, Alfred and Hammond, with their charges, pushed ahead up the ravine, while Old Grizzly, turning square off, breasted the hill-side, and soon emerged upon the open prairie under the full light of the moon. As he had expected, he was instantly sighted by the pursuing Blackfeet, who not knowing that there were others, turned off and began a keen pursuit of the daring man.

This was what Old Grizzly desired, and, with a chuckle, and muttering: "You'll hev a good time a-gittin' me," sprung away toward the mountain, where lay the home of the Wild Huntress, with a speed that soon left the swiftest warrior far in the rear.

Taking advantage of this diversion, the remaining fugitives left the ravine, stole swiftly across the open ground, gained the foothill, and finally reached the timber, as directed, some distance below the bear-tamer's camp.

Here they were safe, and, in the course of half an hour, were seated within the enclosure anxiously awaiting Old Grizzly's return.

It was toward midnight before the deep bark of the watch-dog told of some one ad-

vancing, and a moment later, the bear-tamer himself stood within the secure walls of his castle.

A few words sufficed to explain his escape, and then the hunters drew off, leaving mother and daughter alone.

Those two, so long severed, sat for hours locked in each other's arms, recounting their past experiences, talking in low, hushed voices, of the dead husband and father, and laying plans that were to govern the future.

At length wearied nature gave way, and all sought a sleeping-place, the women within, and the men without the cavern.

Morning dawned bright and clear, and soon the little camp was alive with busy preparations.

The old bear-tamer was preparing to defend his castle, for he well knew that the Blackfeet would not give up their chief's daughter without a deadly struggle.

And he was right. While they were snatching a hasty repast, the warning bark of the watchful sentinel told them that the struggle was near at hand.

"Up with ye, an' grup yur' weepins, fur I tell yur thar's goin' to be Ole Scratch to pay!" cried Old Grizzly, grasping his rifle and running down to the entrance, into which he disappeared.

When he reached the further end and peered out from behind the rock that lay in front, a startling scene met his eye.

"Faggots an' flints! the hill tribe, men, weemin' an' children, ar' out!" he exclaimed over his shoulder to Alfred and the Avenger, who had just come up. "Jest take a peek an' see what yur thinks uv it."

Alfred looked out, and almost instantly exclaimed:

"Here comes an Indian with a flag of truce."

"Ar' that so?" quickly asked Old Grizzly. "Wal, I didn't look fur that, nohow! It ar' better n' I hoped fur. Yur see they don't like to tackle me an' the b'ars, an' I don't much blame 'em."

"They think you are a big Medicine," said Hammond, quietly. "That is the true reason of their not attacking."

"Wal, I guess yur' b'ou right. Enny-way, here's the red-skin, an' we'll soon know what ar' up."

As he ceased speaking Iron Heel, for it was that gallant warrior, stepped briskly forward, carrying in his hand a piece of bleached buckskin and halted some few feet in front.

"What do we want, red-skin?" asked Old Grizzly, walking out and advancing to where the Indian stood.

"The Man of the Bears came like a thief, and when it was night stole the daughter of the chief. I have come for her," was the stern reply.

"That a dod-durned lie, red-skin," exclaimed the old trapper, angrily, "an' ef you hadn't the white thing in yur' hand, I'd have told it down yur' throat!"

"Where is Silver Tongue, the daughter of Big Hand?" asked Iron Heel, calmly.

"In that," shouted the bear-tamer, "an' that shal' stay till she wants to leave uv her own wauatin'. I tell you what, red-skin—"

"The warriors call me Iron Heel," said the Indian.

"Wal, then, Mr. Iron Heel, I'll tell you what I'll do. You go an' fetch Big Hand. He may see the gal, an' ef she wants to go back wi' him why well an' good, he may have her—but stop," as the Indian turned hastily away, "ef she don't want to go back, ain't willin', you know, why then she'll be let alone to go whar she wants to. Do ye agree to that?"

"Big Hand will answer the Man of the Bears," replied the warrior, striding rapidly away.

In the course of half an hour he again appeared, this time accompanied by the head chief of the tribe.

Big Hand was evidently fearfully inclined, but as the Avenger had said, he considered Old Grizzly too much of a Medicine to quarrel with, if it could be avoided.

To him the bear-tamer made the same proposal, to which the chief readily agreed, thinking that his child would be only too glad to fly to his arms.

"You agree to the bargain. No back-down," inquired Old Grizzly.

"Big Hand has spoken. His tongue is not forked and it can not lie," was the hasty response.

"Fetch out the gal an' the woman," said the bear-tamer, taking his rifle. He had no intention of allowing any treachery.

In a few moments Silver Tongue and her mother appeared.

When the former beheld her adopted father, of whom she was very fond, she ran forward and clasped her arms round his brawny neck.

"Ugh!" said the Indian, while his face gleamed with pleasure.

"Hold on, old ha'r-lifter, an' see it out. Ax her to go home," cried Old Grizzly.

"The lodge of the chief is dark, without his child. She will come and bring back the sunshine?" he said, interrogatively.

The change in the manner of the young girl, from joy, to apparently the deepest sorrow, was instantaneous. Without a word feel yur' way up under kiver. As to yur," he said, turning to Leaping Elk, "you jess scot out this. Yur can't do no good, an' ef yur people find out that yur've been helpin' us, thar'll be catamounts to pay."

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The day following the visit of the Blackfeet, a grand council had been held, to which the whites were invited.

Here a treaty of peace between Old Grizzly and the Indians had been entered into, by which the former was assured of their friendship, so long as he remained friendly to the whites.

Silver Tongue was present, and the parting between her and her father was most affecting, though the old warrior tried hard to conceal his emotion. The young girl had been greatly loved by all the tribe, and when she mounted the white horse to ride back to the bear-camp, she found three others standing by—a gift from the tribe.

Not only this, but many valuable furs, ornaments, etc., had been contributed, so that she would not have to go to the altar a dowerless bride.

By consent of his father, Leaping Elk was to take up his abode with the "Great Medicine of the Bears" so Old Grizzly was not left entirely alone.

The journey to California was not made without many hardships and much danger, but the little party at length arrived at San Francisco in safety. Here Alfred and Agnes Hammond were married, and the following summer the same ceremony was performed for Richard Hammond and Rosa—the Wild Huntress of the Hills.

THE END.

But his comrades are past the suicidal epoch; the love of life with them is strong, indeed.

"If you want to die so bad, why not do it to save us?" says one.

It is what I have been fearing for hours. This secret craving has at length found voice. Each dreaded to advance the proposal until the unhappy lad's words broke the ice. Now they all take it up, and the dreadful desire for food of any kind has stilled all other feelings in their hearts.

The lad is cowed now—he could face death with his comrades; but the thought of his body providing food for his fellow-men is too horrible. I see his danger, for a weapon gleams in the sunlight. I reach forward to seize the glittering blade, but I can not parry the blow. With a cry, the boy falls across the gunwale, stabbed to the heart!

Like a pack of hungry vampires, the sea-men strive to such the wound from which the youth's warm life-blood wells up; but, dreading its effect on themselves—knowing it will madden their brains—I suddenly tip the corpse overboard, and it sinks from our gaze.

A torrent of imprecations are rained upon my head, and threats are uttered against me!

"I hope so, doctor!"

"And we have!"

"It was his self-abnegation that so nearly killed him; he shot a bird on the last night of our terrible trials; but he gave its flesh and blood to me, though he was suffering all the agonies of starvation and torments of thirst."

Light comes, the voices bring it back! The golden vails are withdrawn. Bending over me is an angelic face—the face of her I love; yellow curls cluster and sweep over my brow.

"Minnie!"

"He knows me, doctor! Thank God, he will yet survive!"

"Darling!"

"Yes, Harry, yours, and yours only."

"Are we in heaven?"

"No, dearest, aboard the United States ship Susquehanna; she rescued us the day after we sank the bird."

"Do you love me, Minnie?"

"Would I kiss you like this if I did not, Harry?"

"Better let my patient remain as tranquil as possible, Miss Everett. He needs quiet now, and you will doubtless have ample opportunity in after years to be affectionate to each other."

"I hope so, doctor!"

"And we have!"

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A few Advertisements will be inserted on this page at the rate of fifty cents per line, nonpareil measurement.

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NIGHT IN THE SIERRAS.

THE CAMP-FIRE.

BY E. W. DRUMMOND.

Red sink the sun that night afar,
Behind the snow-robed summit peak,
We saw uprising moon and star,
And heard the night-wind wailing weak;
With you along ever so high,
A round the wide skies low shadows walling
The Day his lingering robes of light,
Toward the dim wild west was trailing.

As twilight fell we heard the quill,
Away on whirling pinions sail,
To join his mate whose anxious call
Rang shrilly down the mountain wall.
And the low, deep drum note of the grouch,
With which the wind his wild show,
Was stirred up to and fro.
In the chambers of his leafy house,
As night grew on the owl awoke,
And overhead the silence broke;
A gony alanthrope was he
Hooting there.

As though it grieved him there should be,
A day that dragged so weary,
And when he ceased his solemn cries,
A kind of glad surprise
To hear the wind stirring near,
And gray fox bark—a note of fear
To startled birds that high or low
Heard stir beneath the prowler go.

What cared we how the sun went down?
What cared we through the night with
Grew round us with a darker frown?
We sat down by the fire and we sing,
Against clouding gloom its ruddy ring,
Beguiled with tale or cheered with song
To bring the boyhood's dreams again,
And touched the strings of joy and pain,
We saw the dark pines round us rise,
Like gloomy ghosts against the skies.

With here and there an arm outflung,
We seemed a shadowy crew that make
In the fastness where the breeze it swings,
And with some ghostly music shaker.

Once faint through the darkness came
Each hand upon the ready gun,
And close around the dying flame;
With scarce a breath and never a word,
Each hand upon the ready gun,
We stood there, silent, by the gloom
The low-swing moon could not illuminate,
For well we knew the grizzly passed
Through the chapparal that grew so near,
And for a space our hearts beat fast,

It may be with some touch of fear.
Ah, well! the eyes that watched are dim,
And the heart is pale and pulseless now;
She, who trembled on the storm,
Look back and can but wonder how
The freshness of those happy days
Should gleam so far through darkened ways,
Since the mountain shone so bright,
Lies down with us, we've gone before;
Though failure did our steps beset.

And Fortune spurned us from her door;
Sweet, sweet shall be the dreamless rest

Scuff on, ye proud! let another rise

When marble shrines the favored dead,
Ours shall be Nature's ministrations

And high above each lonely bed,
The solemn pines to heaven reach,

With gesture more than mortal speech.

\$20,000 Reward.

A TALE OF THE CRESCENT CITY.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

The evening shades that heralded the close of a sultry August day, fell upon a repulsive-looking man in one of the dingiest thoroughfares of New Orleans, in the maddening days of *La Flite*. His dress proclaimed him a sailor, and he was a pirate.

He stood before a dingy stone building upon the wall of which was pasted the following advertisement, which, with scarcely any education, he was trying to master:

"STOLEN.—\$20,000 REWARD."

"On the night of the Twentieth of October Hulda, the little daughter of Jared Ellsworth, banker, was stolen from her chamber by some person or persons unknown to her parents. She was a bright little child, nine years of age, delicately built, and possessed long auburn hair and bright-blue eyes. The motive that led to the abduction is unknown, and I hereby offer a reward of twenty thousand dollars in gold for her return."

"JARED ELLSWORTH, BANKER."

"Twenty thousand dollars in gold!" muttered the man, proceeding to read the placard. "With that sum in my wallet I'd leave the sea and settle down in this city; and, if I do not leave the water mighty soon, it's going to become Tom Roper's great coffin, that's what's the matter."

He paused to transfer some tobacco from an elegant box to his hairy mouth, and proceeded, as he drew nearer the advertisement, for the deepening shades were rendering the letters indiscernible.

"On the night of the Twentieth of October, it says. Now, I happen to know a thing or two about that particular night, I do. We lay out yonder in the water, and I rowed Captain Torrequo to the city, and waited at the wharf for him, till midnight. Now, what was he doing alone in the city? I never knew him to cut such a caper before. He always took a couple of us with him, because he always got into some bloody scrapes. Well, about midnight here he came back to the boat, and I saw a smile on his lips, in the light of the moon. He 'peared uncommon jovial about something, while we returned to the shore, and when he thought I warn't listening, I heard him say that they—which meant somebody—would give fifty thousand for her—which meant something, too. I never thought any thing of that expression, since until this minute, and I b'lieve that the captain stole—what's her name?—Hulda Ellsworth."

Having arrived at this conclusion, the speaker deposited a mouthful of tobacco juice upon the dilapidated pavement, drew his great hat over his eyes, and walked toward the wharf.

At the foot of the worm-eaten pier he entered a boat, where he was presently joined by two men, as repulsive as himself, and after an exchange of words, the trio pulled toward a rakish-looking vessel that lay out in the bay.

As they stepped upon the deck of the piratical craft, a tall and dark-haired man approached them, and inquired of one—not Tom Roper—how things went in the city.

"Excitement prevails in certain quarters," was the reply. "The daughter of a rich banker has been missing for some time—since the twentieth of last October. I believe—and placards, offering a large reward for her recovery, are posted over the entire city."

"Ah!" ejaculated the questioner, who was none other than Torrasquez Torrequo, a bloodied pirate than his contemporary, La Flite, and the scourge of the Gulf. "Why did you not obtain one of those placards?"

"I did, captain," answered the sailor, and he drew a roll of heavy paper from his bosom.

The pirate seized it, and glanced at its contents in the light of the lamp that hung in the bow of the craft.

"Only twenty thousand dollars!" he sneered, crushing the paper in his hand.

somely-gloved hand. "When Jared Ellsworth adds thirty thousand to it he may begin to look for his child," and with this he walked from the men and disappeared below.

"By the storms of Neptune! I was right," muttered Tom Roper, in an undertone. "And I'm going to work mighty hard for that yellow pile."

He had scarcely finished when Torrequo reappeared on deck, enveloped in a black cloak.

He approached Roper—the most thorough sailor on the ship—and requested to be rowed to the city. The pirate did not note the flash of the greedy sailor's dark eyes, and a minute later they were breasting the waves in a little boat.

When the frail boat struck the pier, the pirate debarked, and, in low tones, commanded Roper to await his return. The sailor promised obedience; but no sooner was Torrequo's back turned, than he followed him.

The Scourge of the Gulf led his sailor a weary chase; but, at last, Tom was rewarded by seeing him enter a forbidding house, in the Spanish quarter of the city. For an hour, Roper tried to peep beyond the walls, but in vain. The interior of the structure was a sealed book to him, and at length, but not disheartened, he turned away and sought the boat.

An hour later Torrequo returned, and in silence Tom pulled for the ship.

When the boat struck the vessel's side, the pirate gained the deck with an agility unknown to Tom, who, presently rose to follow.

"Traitor!" cried Torrequo, bending over the taffrail, with a pistol in his hand. "What have dared to spy the movements of your chief; and thus I punish unfaithful dogs!"

A bright flash illuminated the waves, and with a shriek, Tom Roper fell headlong from the boat.

Satisfied with the result of his shot, the Spaniard sheathed the smoking pistol in his bosom, and sought a pirate's couch and a pirate's dreams.

When morning broke upon the waves, Tom Roper's body was not to be seen, and the boat was just discernible, drifting afar out to sea.

Thus had perished a pirate's golden chance.

At least Torrequo thought thus.

At the period of which I write the cholera

was rampant.

LONG after Austen, the present capital of Texas, had become to be quite a "city," it was, at times, subjected to flying visits from the Comanches, whose country lay to the west and north-westward, and, on more than one occasion, men and women were stricken down in the very heart of the town, or else carried off to a captivity that was far worse

than death itself. The incident I am about to relate is still fresh in the minds of many who were present when it occurred, and I believe the heroine of the story is still living; or, if not, only very recently dead. On a certain night in the year 1838, a large and "fashionable" party were assembled in the fine mansion of General H——, to do honor to his only daughter, whose birth-night it was.

The dwelling stood upon a gentle eminence which was then upon the outskirts of the "city," surrounded by a fine grove of live oak and other trees, the whole enclosed by a hedge of prickly-ash that was impregnable, save at the one opening left for the entrance, and which was protected by a heavy gate.

The raps were answered by the query, "Who's there?" spoken in Spanish, by a woman beyond the gloomy portal.

"Torrequo," answered the one upon the rotten step, and the door opened.

A tall woman, with Medusa features, stood in the corridor, holding a dying candle.

As the man stepped within, she uttered a shriek, and turned to fly; but, his great hand flew forward, and closed upon her arm in a grip of steel.

The man was not Torrasquez Torrequo; but Tom Roper!

"You have a little girl what I want, here," he said.

"I have not."

"Woman, lying won't do you any good," he said, with a stern look. "The child is here. Torrequo stole her from her parents, and brought her to your door. He stole her upon her sister's wedding eve, and there will be no wedding until the girl comes back."

"And if she dies from home?"

"Then her sister never weds. Such the oath she has taken."

The woman grew into a state of indecision.

"Time is precious!" cried the pirate, snatching the candle from her hand. "I want twenty thousand dollars. Lead me to the stolen child, or form an acquaintance with an ounce of cold lead."

A determined expression covered the man's face, and the woman, still pausing, curiously asked:

"Do you fear the cholera?"

"No!" shouted the sailor, with an oath.

The woman stepped forward, as a shudder passed over her frame.

At the end of the long, murky corridor, she opened a door, and stepped into a chill apartment.

The pirate could not repress a cry of horror at the sight that met his gaze, and bent forward with shaded eyes to look upon it.

On a wretched pallet of straw, and ill-covered with a dirty quilt, lay the emaciated form of a little girl, whose wild look and

wan features told that the cholera was doing its horrible work unmolested.

"Where's the doctor?" cried Roper, looking up at the woman.

"She never had one," was the reply.

Such inhumanity shocked the pirate.

"She's nearly dead, but may be saved," he said. "I'll—"

Approaching footsteps in the corridor broke the sentence. The sailor turned, and the light revealed Torrasquez Torrequo.

With an oath, the Spaniard dashed forward; but a ball from Roper's pistol stretched him dead across the threshold.

"There's a reward of ten thousand dollars for Torrasquez Torrequo, dead or alive," he said, quietly, turning to the woman.

"He thought I was dead. He shot me last night; but the ball merely grazed my temple, and when I recovered I easily swam to the city."

Half an hour later a physician stood over little Hulda Ellsworth, and, despite the progress the disease had made, she recovered.

When Tom Roper witnessed her recovery by her bereaved parents, he refused to accept the large reward offered for her recovery; but took that offered for the pirate chief, and left the Crescent City, with more than one of Torrequo's avenging followers upon his track.

But he baffled them, and ultimately died a natural death in Baltimore.

Shortly after Hulda's restoration, her sister, released from her vow, wedded the man of her choice, and nine years later, the beautiful belle of New Orleans—Hulda Ellsworth—was united to a man upon whom our nation has conferred great honors.

Recollections of the West.

Heading off a War-Party.

BY CAPT. BRUNI ADAMS.

LONG after Austen, the present capital of Texas, had become to be quite a "city," it was, at times, subjected to flying visits from the Comanches, whose country lay to the west and north-westward, and, on more than one occasion, men and women were stricken down in the very heart of the town, or else carried off to a captivity that was far worse

than death itself. The incident I am about to relate is still fresh in the minds of many who were present when it occurred, and I believe the heroine of the story is still living; or, if not, only very recently dead. On a certain night in the year 1838, a large and "fashionable" party were assembled in the fine mansion of General H——, to do honor to his only daughter, whose birth-night it was.

The dwelling stood upon a gentle eminence which was then upon the outskirts of the "city," surrounded by a fine grove of live oak and other trees, the whole enclosed by a hedge of prickly-ash that was impregnable, save at the one opening left for the entrance, and which was protected by a heavy gate.

The edge of the timber was reached, the rangers had gathered their reins for a sudden dash, when the warning voice of their leader stayed the movement.

"Steady!" he exclaimed. "By all that's lucky, they're going to halt!"

Almost before he had ceased speaking, the warriors had sprung from their ponies, the long lariats were uncoiled with marvelous rapidity, and the mustangs were busy cropping the rich mesquit grass.

Spears were thrust into the ground, each warrior selecting his own place, arms and equipments piled up at the foot, and the owners throwing themselves at length upon the turf, prepared to enjoy a brief rest after the long, hard drive.

But these maneuvers were scarcely noted by the watchful rangers.

All eyes were centered upon the form of a young and lovely girl, whom an Indian had assisted from the back of the mustang she had ridden.

She was dressed in pure white, the faded roses still clinging to her hair, which had fallen in disheveled masses over her shoulders and around her pale face, upon which were evidences of grief and suffering.

As the stern frontiersmen gazed upon this pitiful sight, it required all the authority of their officers to restrain an instantaneous charge.

But the moment soon came.

A few hurried orders were given, each man assigned his post and duty, two of the most experienced instructed to make at once for the prisoner, to prevent her being tomahawked in the melee, and then, clear and shrill as a trumpet-note, rung out the word:

"Charge!"

Had a thunderbolt fallen amid the unsuspecting savages, the alarm and confusion could not have been greater. Right and left the enraged rangers deployed as they emerged from cover, swooping down with the rapidity of the wind right into the midst of their almost helpless enemies.

The fight was brief, but bloody.

Two-thirds of the Comanches were left dead upon the field, and the wearied, heart-broken girl rescued without harm.

There was great rejoicing in Austen three days later, and, in view of the happy occasion, the old general insisted upon having another birth-day gathering, at which nothing occurred to mar the pleasure of the guests.

come to celebrate—the only child of their host!

In less than half an hour the rangers were in the saddle, and, after a brief consultation, and a few words of hope from their officer to the bereaved father, they were away on the trail of the marauding savages like a whirlwind.

At daylight a close inspection of the "sign" left by the savages revealed their number to be about equal to that of the pursuing party, and as odds of two or three to one were considered as not too great, the rangers pressed forward, certain of victory if they could but get within striking distance.

Among the rangers were some of the best mountain and prairie-men on the border.

With a shout the Spaniard dashed forward.

"There's a reward of ten thousand dollars for Torrasquez Torrequo, dead or alive," he said, quietly, turning to the woman.

"He thought I was dead. He shot me last night; but the ball merely grazed my temple, and when I recovered I easily swam to the city."